

**Amendments to the Claims:**

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A surface emitting semiconductor laser, comprising:  
a laminate of semiconductor layers emitting multimode laser light; and  
a block member blocking light of at least a fundamental mode among the multimode laser light emitted from the laminate,

the block member being provided separate from an electrode provided on a top of the laminate, wherein:

the block member is made of a material identical to that of the electrode,

the laminate includes a current confinement layer having a conductive region, and

the block member has a size smaller than a size of the conductive region.

2. (Original) The surface emitting semiconductor laser as claimed in claim 1, wherein:

the laminate comprises a substrate, a lower reflection mirror on the substrate, an upper reflection mirror, an active region, and a current confinement layer, the active region and the current confinement layer being interposed between the upper and lower reflection mirrors; and

the block member is provided in an emission aperture provided above the upper reflection mirror.

3. (Previously Presented) The surface emitting semiconductor laser as claimed in claim 1, wherein:

a top of the laminate is partially covered with the electrode so that an emission aperture can be defined; and

the block member is provided on the top of the laminate and is located in the center of the emission aperture.

4. (Original) The surface emitting semiconductor laser as claimed in claim 1, wherein:

the laminate has a mesa;

an emission aperture is formed on the mesa; and

the emission aperture and the block member have shapes related to an outer shape of the mesa.

5. (Canceled)

6. (Previously Presented) The surface emitting semiconductor laser as claimed in claim 1, wherein material of the block member is the same as that of the electrode.

7-13. (Canceled)

14. (Currently Amended) An optical communication system, comprising:

a surface emitting semiconductor laser; and

an optical fiber optically connected to the surface emitting semiconductor laser,

the surface emitting semiconductor laser comprising:

a laminate of semiconductor layers emitting multimode laser light; and

a block member blocking light of at least a fundamental mode among the multimode laser light emitted from the laminate,

the block member being provided separate from an electrode provided on a top of the laminate, wherein:

the block member is made of a material identical to that of the electrode,

the laminate comprises a current confinement layer having a conductive region, and

the block member has a size smaller than a size of the conductive region.

15. (Canceled)

16. (Previously Presented) The surface emitting semiconductor laser as claimed in claim 1,

wherein the block member has a diameter D1 defined as follows:

$$D1 = L1 \times 2 \tan(\theta_n/2)$$

where L1 is a distance from the surface emitting semiconductor laser device to the block member,  $\theta_n$  is a divergence angle of emitted light of the fundamental mode from an optical source of the surface emitting semiconductor laser device in a far-field image of the multimode laser light.

17. (Previously Presented) The surface emitting semiconductor laser as claimed in claim 1, wherein the block member is made of metal.

18. (Canceled)